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COALITION WARFARE: MORE POWER OR MORE PROBLEMS?

by

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The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College, Department of the Navy or the Department of the Air Force.

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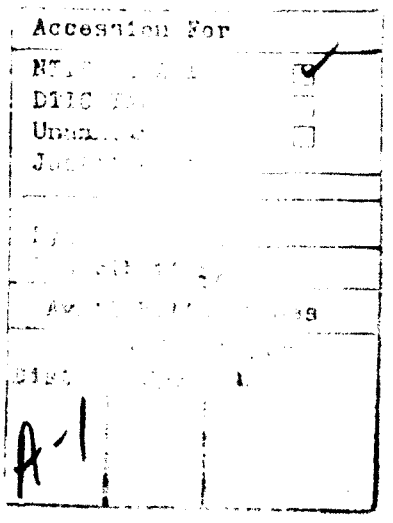

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

"Every future U.S. operation is going to be joint." We have heard it from political leaders, commanders, teachers and students of warfare alike - joint operations are here to stay. However, another truism which history bears out is that future operations will not only be joint but most likely involve other nations in combined or coalition operations.[1]

> "Our first priority in foreign policy remains solidarity with our allies and friends. The stable foundation of our security will continue to be a common effort with peoples with whom we share fundamental moral and political values and security interests. Those nations with whom we are bound by alliances will continue to be our closest partners in building a new world order."[2]

Since World War I, every war and most peacetime contingencies the U.S. has participated in have been coalition operations.

While coalitions are possibly the most difficult way to conduct military operations, the international support can yield increased capabilities, financial cost sharing, access and world acceptance not available in unilateral operations. Along with these benefits come significant constraints in establishing acceptable goals and agreeable methods to achieve coalition objectives. Despite these difficulties, the coalition's value in most cases outweighs the costs, and coalition warfare is historically the "American way of war." The U.S. national strategy affirms our readiness to join

allies and friends in the quest for global security and balance of power.[3] We rely on the classic principles of war which proclaim the unity of command, but in most coalitions, unity of effort is the best we can achieve. This paper will review historic coalition efforts, focusing particularly on Korea and the Gulf War to show that although cumbersome and restrictive, coalitions offer many political and military benefits which outweigh the costs.

Coalition warfare is both complex and complicated: the paradox is that while often a source of strength, coalitions are as often a weakness as well. General Maurice Sarrail reflected on this fact in a comment he made in 1918: "Since I have seen Alliances at work, I have lost something of my admiration for Napoleon."[4] Many factors mitigate against comprehensive planning for future coalitions, but failing to consider the challenges in advance will invite failure.

Nature of Coalitions and Alliances:

Coalitions differ from alliances in that they are more loosely bound and usually focus on a single objective, often disbanding after the objective is met. Despite an American history rich in coalition operations, no single source document contains the warfighting doctrine for combined operations.[5] Americans seem to know far more about the difficulties of allied operations than how to overcome those difficulties. Joint Pub 3 (Test) is the first attempt to codify doctrine for combined operations, with less than 10 pages on the subject. Just as politicians have not always agreed on the value of coalitions, academicians and strategists have struggled with defining its terms.

The lack of a universally accepted definition for coalition or alliance is the first indication that although much is written on the subject, there is a pronounced lack of agreement on many issues. The differences are not simply semantic, the authors vary widely in their fundamental conception of coalitions and alliances. For some authors, coalition and alliance are basically interchangeable terms, recognizing either to mean "a formal agreement between two or more nations to collaborate on national security issues."[6]

Alliances most commonly reflect multiple complementary interests while a coalition often highlights only a single interest.[7] Additionally, an alliance is often an ongoing

relationship between nations which is documented by a formal agreement or publicized by membership in an organization.

Joint Pub 0-1 defines coalition as: an informal arrangement between two or more nations for a common action; and alliance as a result of formal agreements between two or more nations for broad long-term objectives.[8] For the purpose of this paper, coalition and alliance will be used as defined in Joint Pub 0-1. The purpose of the paper is to expand on the understanding of coalitions, and references to alliances will be made only as they contribute to that understanding.

Military action by an established alliance is usually called combined operations, while ad hoc international agreements will yield coalition warfare. Unfortunately, most writers use these two terms interchangeably and no definite, meaningful distinction is possible.

Additional terms which are relevant to this subject are collective security, pact, bloc and entente. Each of these terms has been defined in many ways, and along with coalition and alliance are largely employed as interchangeable. No attempt is made to achieve an irrefutable definition of these terms.[9] It is sufficient to recognize all these terms as techniques of statecraft: methods of regulating the balance of power or an international organization.[10]

History of Coalitions:

History abounds with examples of coalitions to shed light on this study. Recorded history of wars adequately shows that

statesmen of the past were well aware of the positive effects of alignments and pacts in the pursuit of the military and political goals. Much can be learned from a review of history to see how coalition warfare was conceived and employed in the past.

Thucydides recorded an early example of coalition warfare in the Spartan coalition which united to defeat the Athenians in 432 BC. Although clearly outclassed at sea, this coalition demonstrated the theory of a less powerful nation seeking help from others to maintain the regional stability and balance of power. The American Revolution saw the French and Spanish forces join the colonists in an unlikely coalition which shared common values but had divergent national interests. The combined combat strength and psychological advantage quickly led to the defeat of General Cornwallis and the British. Without the French and Spanish, the outcome would likely have been different. This was the first example of an American coalition, and since then our preference for combined operations is evident, despite a checkered record of success. Since then the U.S. has fought alongside allies in the following conflicts: Boxer revolution, World War I, Russian Intervention, World War II, Korea, Vietnam and most recently in the Persian Gulf. Additionally, the U.S. has led numerous humanitarian, nation-building and security missions during peacetime with a coalition.

Military Operations & Political Consequences

Clausewitz reminds us that the military is an extension of politics and all military operations have political implications. War (or any military action) is not an isolated act, but part of a national political continuum. Recognizing the political nature of coalitions is essential. Political considerations will determine the type and extent of military action. Our military works for the civilian government, so the U.S. forces respond to the will of the people, as ordered by their elected officials (the Clausewitzian Triangle). Military operations will be most effective when they reflect the combined desires of the American people, our allies and a a concern for world opinion.

Our actions in maintaining the anti-Iraq coalition when Israel was threatened by ballistic missile attack is a good example of political expediency. The swift and decisive deployment of Patriot air defense missiles to Israel demonstrated both U.S. political support for their defense and military capability. Our actions dissuaded Israel from retaliatory attacks against Iraq and negative effects on the coalition. Saddam Hussein attacked the coalition unity as a center of gravity by trying to involve Israel as a combatant against an Arab nation. Israel's willingness to restrain its military response denied Saddam a key objective, kept Jordan out of the war, and kept the coalition intact.[11]

Chapter 2

Why Join Coalitions or Alliances?

Political Reasons: Nations join alliances to safeguard or further their own interests. "Nations occasionally enter into agreements with other nations or groups for mutual advantage or shared interests."[12] In the absence of an alliance and faced with a threat, each nation makes a choice: either proceed alone with unilateral responsibility for countering the adversary, or seek help from other nations. In some instances, a nation may lack sufficient strength to prevail alone, and may be driven to coalition building out of necessity, not choice. Historically, alliances or coalitions have formed for one of three basic reasons:

- to provide sufficient force to counter an enemy (usually a coalition);
- to announce alignment of nations as a deterrent to an enemy (primarily alliances);
- to make common goals into formal agreements (often a function of alliances vice coalitions).[13]

Military Reasons: Nations who lack sufficient military strength will seek coalition partners to protect their interests or borders. Strong countries will seek coalitions for several different reasons:

- to gain increased military strength or capabilities
- to gain access to strategic bases or national infrastructure

- may seek partners to share in the expense.

For democracies, it is especially important to establish legitimacy for the use of force in a world increasingly conscious of international law, ever more interdependent and bound together by multi-layered international organizations. This legitimacy or world acceptance is available in the long term by alliances and on an ad hoc basis through coalitions.[14] International organizations such as the UN and NATO can also provide legitimacy through their global political influence and leadership role. By endorsing or supporting military action, these organizations send a strong, clear signal to both current and future aggressors.[15]

Balance of Power:

The United States has participated in an unprecedented number of alliances since World War II, largely to prevent the spread of communism; and as a direct function of our policy of containment. The essence of alliances is power and the United States harnessed that strength to counter the spread of totalitarianism. Tangible evidence of the U.S. preference for alliance is our current membership in seven formal alliances plus many other defense agreements and less formal arrangements. NATO has become a central feature in international politics and although changed by the end of the Cold War, will persist in its global importance.

There are many theories about why nations enter coalitions/alliances. Probably the most common and widely

accepted reason to seek a collective agreement is to insure a balance of power (or prevent a regional hegemony).[16] Hegemonic states always arise, so the making, unmaking and re-making of anti-hegemonic coalitions are similarily perennial.[17] The motive for joining together is to preserve the current international structure, power distribution and status quo of international relations. External threat to the distribution of power led directly to the Quadruple Alliance in 1814 and the World War II alliance of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. These alliances aptly demonstrate that partners are often chosen on the basis of common need or the threat, rather than shared values or a sense of community.[18]

Coalition Theories:

A small and militarily weak state would actively seek membership in an alliance or coalition if it were attacked or felt threatened by another state, while a relatively strong state would encourage other states to join in order to present a formidable force to the enemy or to increase international legitimacy. The Anti-Iraq coalition demonstrated both these ideas: Gulf states like the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain sought protection while the United States and Great Britain sought legitimacy in the coalition.

The ideal method of balancing power would be the formation of "ad hoc" coalitions rather than large, entangling alliances. The difficulty with this theory is knowing when a threat justifies coalition formation and what size coalition

is required. Each sovereign nation makes a value judgement before joining a coalition based on the perceived threat and expected political benefit or expense of membership. Coalitions will normally grow only to the minimum point of subjective certainty as regards winning.[19]

Kautilya, an Indian statesman-philosopher argued 23 centuries ago that "a state located between two powerful states should seek collaboration and protection from the stronger of the two."[20] One need not understand Indian culture or politics to appreciate the universal truth embodied in his statement. In the simplist terms, this Indian philosopher-politician explains the long history of alliances and coalitions. Seeking partners for a coalition or alliance seems to be the natural course of action for states who desire to strengthen themselves against an adversary.

Chapter 3

Difficulties of Coalition Operations

Given today's security environment, coalition operations represent both the wave of the future and possibly the best response to any emerging threat. As U.S. forces are scaled back and our forward presence reduced, we become increasingly dependent on other nations to preserve our vital interests. U.S. National Security Strategy acknowledges that we will likely handle future crises with hybrid coalitions, composed of both traditional allies and nations with whom we share little history.[21] The U.S. National Military Strategy affirms our readiness to participate in multilateral operations under the guidance of international security organizations, ad hoc coalitions or even independent actions, as dictated by U.S. interests.[22]

Coalition forces face many challenges in building an effective and functional organization capable of military action. Accommodations of differences in national goals and objectives will very important. Reaching agreement on an acceptable command and control structure will be the first step in establishing unity of effort. Coping with differences of military capabilities, language and doctrine will be a significant challenge in any operation.

Additionally, interoperablity and logistics differences will require constant effort. These problems exist regardless

of the level of integration and are never overcome, but rather are managed through ingenuity and persistence.

National Goals: Each nation will join a coalition or alliance for slightly different reasons, and possess a unique vision of the desired end-state. Also, every nation will experience slight changes in rationale and objective as the coalition unfolds. Differing goals will cause predictable tension in every coalition as well. There are two solutions to the tension: either attempt to harmonize the strategy to satisfy many or employ broad, vague language which is open to many interpretations. Different goals will cause different perception of progress as well. Coalition members will often possess divergent ideas on the measures of effectiveness, perception of the desired end-state and actual objectives of war termination. All must recognize that maintaining cohesion will mean making adjustments for other partners.

Doctrine: Doctrine defines the way forces will fight, and achieving complete agreement on doctrine is unlikely. "Doctrine establishes a particular way of thinking about war and a way of fighting . . . doctrine provides the basis for harmonious actions and mutual understanding."[23] Each coalition will need to explore differences in doctrine and find acceptable common ground. Many differences are minor, but others are not. Doctrine will influence everything from decision-making to force employment and unresolved differences can bring an otherwise perfect operation to a halt.

Terminology will also prove important, and common definitions among all partners are essential.

Rules of Engagement: Rules of engagement (ROE) provide guidance on the conduct of military operations and will vary greatly from one nation to another. No attempt should normally be made to standardize the ROE, but rather exploit the less limited forces to perform missions prohibited in other partner's ROE, and achieve economy of force and effort. Operationally, an acute awareness of the differences in ROE can actually yield greater flexibility and responsiveness in force application.

Command and Control: Traditionally, U.S. commanders seek unity of command in all operations. The realities of coalition operations may limit the span of control to unity of effort. Both strategic and operational command and control are a significant problem. Nations often retain command of their own forces and give operational control or command of the forces they commit. Personalities and cultural sensitivities are necessarily a consideration in combined operations. Liaison officers assigned with allied units and staff can alleviate many of the misunderstandings and problems. The Gulf War offers a very effective example of unity of effort, achieved with two parallel lines of command that coordinated closely and shared common information.[24]

Military Capability: Few armed forces in the world are trained to the our high standards. Accommodation of differing

military capabilities requires careful planning, tailored coordination and close liaison between the forces.[25] Combined forces pursue campaign objectives designed to meet theater objectives for the coalition. The United Nations forces in Korea and German and Italian forces in North Africa exemplified this close cooperation to achieve common objectives in combined operations. The ultimate responsibility rests with the coalition commander to plan and conduct the operations so they exploit complementary strengths and minimize coordination problems. Planners must remain sensitive to national perceptions as well, since some coalition partners may measure their readiness against an outdated yardstick. Operational planners have the difficult task of making the force mix work even if it is less than ideal, due to political necessity.

Language: The difficulty and magnitude of the language problem is often underestimated. Even within the longstanding NATO alliance, language problems occur; in coalitions, a common language must be established. There is a high potential for misunderstanding, even after orders and instructions have been translated for distribution. Acronyms and specialized terminology (for which the U.S. military is world famous) raise the difficulty of communicating exponentially. The problems can be overcome, but the process requires linguists, interpreters and great patience. Language is a severe limitation, and affects all levels of operation.

Interoperabilty: Coalition equipment will vary in age, quality and condition, and some will simply be incompatible. Historically, interoperability problems have been solved by trial and error. Even in longstanding alliances such as NATO, after attempting standardization for over 50 years, many problems still exist. A key consideration for planners is to avoid mirror imaging from their own forces, but rather determine allies' actual capabilities and plan within those limitations. Logistics will present serious challenges in the areas of resources, sustainability, operability and speed of advance. The difficulties of logistics in Somalia is more illustrative for the future than the logistic successes of the Gulf War. Sufficient time and extensive infrastructure cannot be assumed for future operations, and logistics/sustainability is too important to leave to trial and error, so forethought and planning is required.

Intangible Considerations: Cultural differences and ethnic sensitivities are very important so it is critical to operate with a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation. Differences will surface in every area - culture, religious practices, and standards of living. These differences can't simply be ignored; in Desert Shield, Saudi customs were quickly recognized as very different from our own and specific guidelines for proper behavior were distributed to all arriving personnel.[26] The critical ingrediant for overcoming religious and cultural differences is shared mutual respect.

Chapter 4

Advantages of Coalitions

The successful conduct of coalition warfare will require both statecraft and generalship of the highest caliber.[27] Coalitions multiply the difficulties of war, but also offer some unique advantages to unilateral warfare. Coalition members will usually only contribute the minimum level of support required to receive the desired level of protection from other members. For a dominant partner like the United States, national protection is not required, so coalition relationships are often asymetrical. The challenge is to find some benefit in the many concessions required of the dominant powers.

Despite the many challenges to coalition warfare, some valid benefits exist also. Partners benefit from shared military strength and varied capabilities, as well as access to each other's national infrastructure. A significant benefit is global legitimacy of action. Although material contributions may be uneven, sharing of the costs of war can significantly reduce the burden on major powers. Additionally, there are future dividends to coalition partnership which come in the form of future access, increased future interoperability, and a friendly power base for future operations.

Military Capabilities: Militarily, the United States enjoys superiority in all areas except possibly strategic

nuclear forces, where parity exists. Despite our military ability, DESERT SHIELD revealed some areas like minesweeping and chemical decontamination, where our partners greatly expanded the coalition strength. The US had always planned on using NATO minesweeping ability to meet a European threat, and found our ability in that area was sorely lacking during the Kuwaiti reflagging operation, EARNEST WILL. Czechoslovakia contributed mobile decontamination vans to the coalition. Although never required, these vehicles and trained crews would have increased survivabilty in the case of chemical attack. Coalition partners also contributed thousands of trained and equipped soldiers.

Legitimacy: Legitimacy has proven to be one of the most important benefits a coalition brings. "he air of legitimacy, or world acceptance makes any number of small sacrifices easy to bear, compared to a negative world opinion which often follows unilateral action by a dominant nation against a less powerful state.

Access/Infrastructure: One need look no further than the Falklands war to realize how difficult it is to wage war over long distances. Great Britain's challenges in that war would have been greatly eased if a strategic base existed close to the battle, and they had access to it. Access to both national infrastructure and strategic bases cannot be underestimated. Although the United States has the capability to force an entry into almost any location, the political costs often

exceed the gain. The problems in forced entry are greatly reduced by permission and host nation support. The extensive Saudi Arabian infrastructure, constructed largely by the Foreign Military Sales program, made reception of equipment and personnel a fairly orderly process. Without access to the airfields, ports and host nation support in the Persian Gulf, DESERT SHIELD would have been much more difficult.

Cost Sharing: Financial cost sharing is both a benefit of collective effort and an expression of coalition support.

> "Sooner or later, and probably sooner, the view will prevail in American politics that the United States is attempting to produce too much security for too many prosperous counties who could afford to share the burdens of a common defense on a more equitable basis than is the case today."[28]

Japan and Germany were noticibly absent from the coalition in military contributuions, but their financial support was significant. Fiscal constraint is a reality for all military forces, so future cost sharing will be common, rather than an exception.

Future Cooperation: Participation in a coalition yields enduring relationships that can make future cooperation more likely in areas like favorable political influence, country access, military exercises, and interoperability.

Chapter 5

Coalition Leadership and the Role of the U.N.

Leadership:

A coalition, by its ad hoc nature, requires leadership from the ground up, both in the formative and operative stages. Since there is no existing structure when a coalition begins to take shape, the issue of leadership is usually emerging, but not determined. On the contrary, alliances attempt to pre-arrange many facets of multi-national warfare in advance to streamline the transition to hostilities.

It is important to realize the relationship of partners in a coalition does not necessarily translate into friendships. While friendships would have a desirable effect on coalition cohesion, it is neither assured nor required. Additionally, the relationships within a coalition will either be one of coequals or subordinate nations lead by more dominant nations. The level of interaction and consultation will be both dynamic and likely indicative of coalition cohesion. The long-term continuation of coalitions requires continuous compromise between partners.

Coalition cohesion depends greatly on the strategic level for continuous support. Political leaders, diplomats and even some senior military leaders seek consensus with partners and settle differences, actions which are essential for continued cooperation.

The challenges of coalition leadership are ever present. Power within the coalition framework is always relative, with the **proportionality of power** being ideal (the influence over coalition/alliance decisions is directly related to the resources committed).[29] However, control over decision-making brings additional problems. Dominant powers will often be forced to make compromises on decisions in order to maintain coalition cohesion. Paradoxically, the stronger coalition partner is usually in a weaker bargaining position because it has the greater interest in maintaining the alliance.[30] Weaker partners such as Serbia and Austria-Hungary in 1914, Poland in 1939, South Vietnam in the 1960s and many others have used their smaller size to their advantage with leaders.[31]

American Experience

Today, in the post-Cold War years, the apparent American preeminence would suggest that as the lone superpower, U.S. leadership is natural and expected. This presumption deserves careful consideration. Unlike 1945, the U.S. is not an unchallenged supreme global power, but rather must deal with a world comprised of several significant power bases. US global interests will at times coincide with other nations who advocate a particular military action, while at other times our involvement would be undesireable. Our challenge is to continually assess our national interests and when appropriate, encourage other nations to accept responsibility (Bosnia-Hercegovina is a good example of American concerns

about intervention despite international pressure). The issue today is one of transition and authority.[32] How ready are we to share or divest our responsibility and how willing are other nations to accept it? And how prepared are other nations to assume leadership roles in collective security arrangements? The answers to these questions are both complex and crucial to the development of future strategy.

The Weinberger Doctrine is one guide for determining if a particular action is both appropriate and desireable. The responsibility for leading a particular action will often be given to the United States. By virtue of our size, stature, history and capabilities, some leadership roles will be "thrust" upon us. In other cases, America will need to carefully consider the risks and responsibilities of leadership, based on what we expect to be the implications of the proposed actions.

> "As a nation which seeks neither territory, hegemony, nor empire, the Unites States is in a unique position of trusted leadership on the world scene. Old friends view us as a stabilizing force in vitally important regions, new friends look to us for inspiration and security. We serve as a model for the democratic reform which continues to sweep the globe."[33]

The Anti-Iraq coalition led by the United States in 1990-91 was perhaps the most successful coalition in history. Widespread political agreement was the basis for the formation of a coalition to defend Saudi Arabia and eventually eject Iraq from Kuwait. The United States emerged as the logical leader, cashing in on 40 years of NATO cooperation, experience

and logistics, combined with access to Gulf States earned by increasing trust and military operations in the area.

Politically, the coalition benefitted from a U.S. president with clear vision, supported by an almost unprecedented global protest against Iraq's aggression. While President Bush's leadership was central, the coalition's political success depended on the commitment and wisdom of other world leaders who comprised it. The special trust and relationship between the United States and Great Britain was the substance upon which Bush could begin building a coalition against Iraq. He praised the support of Prime Minster Thatcher, saying no one could "find a better friend of freedom." King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Cooperation Council states took great risks in the face of immediate danger, abandoning traditional concerns of non-Arab forces operating in their countries. President Ozal of Turkey and President Mubarak of Egypt made critical contributions, despite complicated and often conflicting political relationships. Once the war began, Israeli leadership was tested; choosing to absorb Scud missile attacks without retaliation frustrated Iraq's objective and ultimately vindicated their decision not to make a military reprisal.

Role of the United Nations:

Many contend the response of the UN to Iraq's unprovoked aggression against a member state has vindicated and rejuvenated a paralyzed institution. To a certain degree, this

ignores a number of prior UN successes, including negotiations which led to a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the freedom of Namibia, and the end of the Iran-Iraq war. Not surprising, the key element to each of these accomplishments was the agreement by the Soviet Union and the United States which enabled the UN to act. Not since 1950 had the UN been so decisive in world action.

When the North Koreans rolled across the 38th parallel in 1950, a new chapter in coalition warfare began. The newly organized United Nations would play a major role in the world response to this aggression. Aided by the absence of the Soviet delegate, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution calling its members "to assist the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore the international peace and security of the region."[34]

Thus, the first United Nations coalition took shape under the careful leadership of the United States. The participation by sixteen member nations under U.S. command set a strong precedent for the future. The resulting coalition was only possible because of a political climate which induced the major players of the U.N. (minus the USSR) to come to an agreement on the use of force. The Cold war would make such cooperation impossible again until 1990. The passage of the Security Council resolution condemning the North Korean advance was made possible largely by the Soviet boycott of the Security Council.

For 40 years, the United Nations was held hostage by political differences and bloc politics, unable to significantly affect world events or reach the organization's full potential. The response to the invasion of Kuwait provides several lessons concerning the role of the UN in the future. The Gulf crisis showed that when the UN successfully responds to threats to the international peace, it can function as a great power compendium. This was the model envisioned by Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Josef Stalir at the end of World War II.

The Security Council resolutions became central in the coalition conduct and legitimacy. The Security Council membership will come into question eventually, since it is composed of victorious World War II allies, who no longer enjoy world equal stature. The replacement of permanent members on the Security Council could again lead to a political impediment to action. Finally, the international consensus on policy towards Iraq will not exist in all future cases.

Chapter 6

Selected Historical Examples: Korea and Desert Storm

U.S. historical participation in coalition operations is extensive and many examples could be used as case studies for analysis. Two contemporary examples are particularly illuminating with regard to coalition warfare: the Korean war and Operation Desert Storm. Both present examples of modern warfare conducted within the context of a United Nations action, and offer valuable insights with pertinent future applicability. Korea has many similarities with contemporary coalition experience -- it was a United Nations sanctioned coalition involving over 12 nations of varied capability and motivation, thrust into a contingency, led by the United States. Operation Desert Storm (also referred to as the Gulf War) is our most recent coalition war and the first major test of "jointness," as prescribed in the Goldwater-Nichols Reorganization Act of 1986. It yields many insights on unity of effort, coalition building, interoperability, technolcgical advances and strategic mobility. Following a brief summary of each case, lessons learned will be examined as well as application for operational practice in the future.

The Korean War

The North Korean invasion was the first real challenge to the American policy of containment and the U.S. administration's main purpose was to avoid a military showdown with the Soviet Union and China. Within two weeks of the

invasion, the United States, supported by Great Britain and France, had secured sufficient international political and military support to begin a military response to the aggression. During this period, the U.S. had managed to secure U.N. Security Council backing in the form of a sanction to allow U.N. intervention in Korea. Subsequent resolutions conferred leadership of the U.N. coalition on the United States. General Douglas MacArthur was soon designated Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command (UNC) by President Truman, who became the U.N. executive agent for the effort.

Shortly thereafter, South Korean forces were placed under U.N. command and General MacArthur directed Lieutenant General Walton Walker to assume command of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army.[35] Thus the precedent was set: unity of command was established at both the strategic and operational levels.

The practical problems which followed with operational command and control were numerous and contentious. In the final resolution, General Walker would issue orders to the ROK Army through their Chief of Staff, who would in turn, direct the ROK forces to execute the requested actions. Although cumbersome, this arrangement satisfied all concerned and worked surprisingly well. Eventually, a varied mix of U.N. combat and support forces began arriving in groups of brigade size or less. These forces were integrated directly into existing U.S. formations.

Logistics and operational support was equally important, but no less complicated than command and control. No infrastructure existed for logistics support beyond the port at Pusan, and at first the problems appeared insurmountable. Not surprisingly, General Walker relied on his Eighth Army to fulfill a dual role as both a theater army (staff functions) and a field army (a fighting organization). This put enormous strain on that unit, since they had responsibility to essentially train, organize and equip the combined army plus plan and design the operations.

Initially, U.N. forces were outnumbered, ill equipped and forced to retreat to a perimeter around Pusan. A reception and training center was established in the Korean theater, which eased integration of allied troops and provided training on U.S. equipment. Also, a logistics and supply system was established to support all coalition forces. Logistics then caused funding to become an issue and a cumbersome system of accounting and reimbursement was necessary.

In the early stages of the conflict, U.N. forces were threatened with total annihilation by the North Koreans. Artillery and air power prevented that from occurring. Once sufficient modern fighters arrived, the umbrella of protection from airpower was available throughout the theater. Within a month, nearly all movement of the North Korean forces had been stopped by interdiction and close air support missions. Firepower proved to be a deciding factor in the war.

Despite strong opposition and relying heavily on the element of surprise, General MacArthur planned and executed an amphibious operation which changed the war. Landing 70,000 U.N. forces at Inchon demonstrated for all the operational leverage of amphibious forces attacks conducted under the cover of air superiority.[36] The operation resulted only after military need was carefully balanced against anticipated risk. Inchon was a triumph of coalition effort in the most difficult circumstances and serves as an object lesson in amphibious operations.

Korea also demonstrated the value of operational intelligence shared with coalition partners. It is generally recognized that U.S. intelligence capabilities will usually far exceed any partners, but access to the information is sometimes discouraged. The need for common knowledge led to a policy which improved operational planning and execution.

Several lessons can be learned from the U.N. coalition in Korea with regards to command, logistics and intelligence. By U.N. direction, unity of command was established, greatly simplifying command relationships and yielding increased efficiency and unquestioned authority. Unity of command is always desired, but seldom achieved; Korea proves its value.

Many inefficiencies occurred in the reception, integration and resupply of coalition forces. The U.N. reception center provides a model for future combined operations of sufficient duration. The failure to achieve

unity of effort in logistics demonstrates the need to establish a single supply system, capable of handling the maximum number of common items -- an interoperability challenge for the future.

The successful employment of airpower and marine amphibious operations heralds the value of jointness and economy of effort. Finally, the value of shared operational intelligence increased operational synchronization and effectiveness.

Operation DESERT STORM - Gulf War 1991

The invasion of Kuwait by neighboring Iraq represented a threat to world interests by virtue of the adjacent Saudi Arabian oil fields. 40% of the world's oil reserves were threatened by an unstable Arab country. The international community joined in a United Nations coalition to halt the aggression, a collective effort which was led by the United States. The goals of the coalition were shared from the start,[37] the effort was united, and the results were swift and decisive.

The Bush administration built a broad international coalition that proved both enduring and resilient. He knew U.S. military presence would be more acceptable in Saudi Arabia if many other Arab nations contributed to the effort; support was also enlisted from Western allies and Asian partners. In all, nearly 50 countries contributed - 38 nations deployed military forces while many others contributed

financially and cooperated in multi-national efforts against Iraq.

This effort was successful largely because coalition members could take confidence from a firm and unwavering stance taken by the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Military analysts realized from the outset the U.S. had both the will and the military ability to do the job alone, but politically, its actions were more acceptable in the context of a coalition.

Command of the coalition forces was a matter of concern to all countries who participated. Unity of command was clearly preferred, but finally a dual chain of command evolved.[38] This compromise required careful coordination and cooperation, but yielded a high unity of effort. Foreign Islamic forces were invited with the understanding they would operate under the Saudi Command Authority. U.S. forces were commanded by the National Command Authority, with CINCCENT exercising command in the theater. Other nations coordinated specific command arrangements for their troops. Personalities of the players is also of critical importance to the success of any coalition operation. In the Gulf War, both military and political leaders remained professional and dignified, despite unavoidable misunderstandings.[39] It is a credit to the commanders that an effective and cooperative relationship was reached, given the various national, ethnic and religious differences.

Armed with almost unanimous international authority, the coalition hoped to drive Saddam out of Kuwait diplomatically.[40] UN Security Council Resolution 678 authorized use of "all necessary means" to force Iraq from Kuwait and restore peace and security to the area. U.S. forces took responsibility for operational planning of the offensive option and exercised operational control of **all forces** once military action was taken. The military plan is well documented, designed to take full advantage of coalition strengths, technology and surprise, while exploiting the enemy weaknesses.[41]

The spirit of renewal at the United Nations and the strength of the coalition were two of the successes from this war. The United States emerged with strong credibility and a likely leader of future coalitions. Militarily, the coalition reduced the length of the conflict and limited friendly casualties.

Each war is different, and operational thinkers must learn from the most recent war, without applying what may be anomalous to future conflicts. In many ways, DESERT STORM may have been less a model for the future and more an anomaly. In the future, we cannot automatically expect 1) the luxury of six months for deployment of forces without hostile attacks; 2) the benefits of international cooperation against the adversary; 3) host nation support including unlimited fuel, water, airfields and ports; 4) to fight in the flat desert

terrain in the winter months and 5) an enemy whose army and air force put up little fight.[42]

There are, however several lessons which can be applied to the future. Airland battle doctrine was evident throughout the campaign plan, and synchronization, maneuver and initiative carried the show. The political value of a coalition is unquestioned, as world opinion grew in favor of the allies, almost everywhere except central Europe.

The U.S. air defenders made the Patriot missile system famous as CNN overstated its success in defeating SCUD missiles. These tactical missiles became operationally important as "force protectors." Whatever their actual military effectiveness, they were politically crucial in "protecting" Israel and the coalition.

Strategic mobility was credited with moving the equivalent of the state of Wyoming to the Gulf in just six months, but it required almost the maximum capability of our airlift and sealift to do it. Ships and planes arrived unopposed and offloaded, without any losses. The Civil Air Reserve Fleet (CRAF) was activated at stage one and carried 20% of the cargo and 60% of the passengers.[43] A larger activation would seriously disrupt airline schedules. One of the clearest lessons is the need for increased strategic sealift capability.

Clausewitz had much to say about the use of history: "Historical examples clarify everything and also provide the

best kind of proof in the empirical sciences. This is particularly true in the art of war."[44] Planners and should take the lessons of history and apply that knowledge to future operations, avoiding the problems of the past.

Chapter 7

Coalitions: Some Observations

The U.S. military has begun a journey to become more joint. In doing so, we must recognize the lessons of history which suggest most undertakings will be either combined or coalition operations, and plan accordingly. We should recognize that coalitions are both cumbersome and may cost some sovereignty, but significant advantages outweigh the negative factors. As the lone superpower, with no desire for empire or hegemony, we will likely respond to regional crises which threaten our national interests with allies or a coalition. We should be prepared to emphasize international political support, even at the expense of some operational efficiency. Currently, our military strength will allow a forcible entry anywhere in the world, but the political cost of such action would negate any gain.

In World War II, the Allied coalition success can be traced to three factors: an effective command structure, efficient logistics and adequate interoperability. The British, like the French in 1918, knew they had prevailed only because of the coalition. Shortly thereafter, the United States found itself alongside France and Great Britain in the Berlin Airlift, Korea, NATO and the Gulf War. The common ideals, democratic styles and long friendships contribute to a long history of trust and solidarity.

Coalitions are primarily political endeavors; operational planners must recognize that political considerations can overshadow military considerations, and they must plan accordingly. Otherwise, the plan will may be predicated on false assumptions or depending on hope as a course of action--practices which are guaranteed to fail.

Four operational factors are common to successful coalitions: effective command and control, efficient logistics, shared knowledge among partners, and some level of interoperability. Each of these areas will be a momentous challenge for every coalition, but successfully solving these problem areas has repeatedly made victory possible.

Currently, no real doctrine exists for coalition or combined operations, with the exception of Joint Pub 3. Doctrine is not a panacea, but the codification of how we plan to approach coalition operations would be a good first step. As we move towards increased jointness, planners and operators should also consider the challenges of coalitions, and prepare for them. "We ought to be seeking tentative answers to fundamental questions, rather than definitive answers to trivial ones."[45]

Conclusion

As a world leader, the United States has pledged to stand solidly by our friends and allies. The future is both uncertain and ambiguous, but new threats to global stability will continually arise. Our response to those threats will be

most effective in the context of a collective action which is internationally supported. History shows that coalitions provide many advantages not available in unilateral actions. The challenge both politically and militarily is to be prepared to act decisively as a leader or partner in a coalition or allied force.

Coalition warfare is both the history and the future of the United States; the challenges of combined operations must be accomodated in our planning and reflected in our doctrine.

Weapons and enemies change, but the terms of international statecraft remain the same. It is instructive to review the lessons of history, including both coalitions which succeeded as well as those which faltered or failed. Coalitions by no means insure success, and their value is best expressed as a relationship of military capability gained to operational constraint imposed. Operationally, the overiding future concerns should be command, logistics and interoperability. The international benefits of coalitions usually outweigh their costs, but without careful planning and study, the success of future coalitions will rest on good fortune and hope.

NOTES:

1. Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces, (Washington D.C.: n.p.), 11 November 1991, p. 41. Chairman Powell confirms that any military operations will have multinational aspects and likely rely on U.S. leadership.

2. The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), August 1991, p. v.

3. Ibid, p. V, 13.

4. Keith Neilson and Ron R. Prete, eds. Coalition Warfare: and Uneasy Accord, (Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press), 1983, p. vii.

5. Waldo D. Freeman et al, "The Challenges of Combined Operations", Military Review, (ft Leavenworth KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College), November 1992, p. 3.

6. Ole R. Holsti et al, Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies, (New York: John Wiley & Sons), 1973, p. 4.

7. Robert E. Osgood, Alliances and American Foreign Policy, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press), 1968, p. 18.

8. Joint Publication 0-1, p. II-44-45.

9. United States Air Force, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force, Volume 2, (n.p., n.p.), March 1992, p. 35 and footnote 25, p. 40.

10. Holsti et al, p. 3.

11. Conduct of the Persian Gulf War, Final Report to Congress. (Washington: Department of Defense), April 1992, p. 31.

12. Joint Pub 0-1, p. II-45.

13. Freeman et al, p. 3.

14. Ibid, p. 3.

15. Pickering, p. 99.

16. Holsti et al, p. 4.

17. Colin S. Gray, War, Peace and Victory, (New York: Simon and Schuster), 1990, p. 247.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid, p. 7.

20. Ibid, p. 1.

21. National Security Strategy, p. 13.

22. National Military Strategy of the United States, (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office), January 1992, pp. 8-9.

23. Fleet Marine Force Manual 1, Warfighting, (Washington D.C.: Department of the Navy), 1989, p. 43.

24. Final Report to Congress, p. 55.

25. FM 100-5 p. 167.

26. Marc Michaelis, "The Importance of Communicating in Coalition Warfare", Military Review, (Ft Leavenworth KS: U.S. Army, College of General Command and Staff), November 1992, p. 46.

27. Gray, p. 245.

28. Ibid p. 228.

29. Neilson and Prete, p. 7.

30. Neilson and Prete, p. 15.

31. Bruce M. Russett, "An Empirical Typology of International Military Alliances," Midwest Journal of Political Science, Vol 15, 1971.

32. Ted Galen Carpenter, ed., America Entangled. The Persian Gulf Crisis and Its Consequences. (Washington D.C.: Cato Institute), 1991, p. 18._

33. National Military Strategy, p. 2.

34. Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, The History of the United Nations Forces in the Korean War, 1973, p. 77.

35. Alan K. Millett and Peter Maslowski, For the Common Defense, (New York: The Free Press), 1984, pp. 484-487.

36. Burton I. Kaufman, The Korean War: Challenges in Crisis, Credibility and Command, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 1986, p. 80.

37. Coalition goals were: the immediate withdrawal from Kuwait; restoration of the legitimate government; security of the Persian Gulf area, including Saudi Arabia; and the safety of civilians in Kuwait and Iraq. These were stated by President Bush on August 5, 1990; contained in Conduct of the Persian Gulf War, p. 22.

38. Conduct of the Persian Gulf War, p. 55.

39. A good example of professionally dealing with coalition didifferences between Schwartkopf and Khalid is told in Schwartzkopf, H. Norman and Petre, Peter, It Doesn't Take A Hero, (New York: Bantam Books), October 1992, pp. 401-403.

40. For detailed comment on the United Nations authorizations, see Chaytes, Abram, "Gulf War Isn't Possible Without the UN", Los Angeles Times, November 9, 1990, p. 135.

41. A complete explanation of the coalition strategy is contained in Summers, Harry G. Jr. On Strategy II; A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War, (New York: Dell Publishing), 1992, pp. 268-294.

42. Persian Gulf War: Defense-Policy Implications for Congress, (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service), 15 May 1991, p.2.

43. Ibid, p. 56.

44. Clausewitz, Carl von, On War, Howard, Michael and Paret, Peter eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1976, p. 170.

45. James H. Bilington, quoted in Gray, War, Peace and Victory, p. 9.

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